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Department of Military Psychiatry
Division of Neuropsychiatry
WRAIR, Annual Research Summaries
1 October 1987 - 30 September 1988



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DIVISION OF NEUROPSYCHIATRY
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY PSYCHIATRY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20307-5100

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Division of Neuropsychiatry
WRAIR, Annual Research Summaries
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Edited by James E. McCarroll, Ph. D.
LTC, MS
Deputy Chief for Administration

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This WRAIR Annual Report concerns research activities conducted by members of the Department of Military Psychiatry for the period 1 October 1987 - 30 September 1988. This report provides a status update of research projects to include a brief description of the purpose, major projects completed during this period, and those expected during the next fiscal year.

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WRAIR Annual Research Summaries
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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Stress and Health in Army Survivor Assistance Officers, Phase II

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: CPT Paul Bartone, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: June 1986

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: December 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

This research examines the long-term sequelae of exposure to the stressors associated with assisting family members of disaster victims. Survey research methods were utilized, including closed and open-ended items. Phase I of this project documented the responses of Survivor Assistance Officers in the year following the Gander airline crash, with an emphasis on describing the quality and quantity of stress encountered. Phase II applies multivariate analyses to clarify the impact of exposure on health and symptomatology over time, and identifies factors that confer resistance to stress. Three time points of data are analyzed, including long-term follow up data collected two years post-crash. Phase III will refine these analyses, looking more closely at family issues (e.g., the interplay between SAO and victim family constellations), and apply these results to the design of a comprehensive study of Army Survivor Assistance Officers.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

This work has shown that (a) there is a significant and strong relation between exposure to SAO stress and health/well-being; (b) most severe sources of stress involve confusion and lack of information, exposure to family grief and emotional distress, and role ambiguity; (c) social supports from commanders and family members, and personality hardiness confer resistance to the ill-effects of stress.

PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

In addition to further dissemination of these findings to military and professional audiences in the form of briefings, presentations, and written reports, we are currently working on a revised SAO handbook that can be used by DA Casualty Affairs. Results of this study are being incorporated into a formal research protocol for routinely collecting data on psycho-social stress and health in Army Survivor Assistance Officers.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Group Reconstitution and Recovery After Traumatic Loss

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: CPT Paul Bartone, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: October 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: December 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This project aims to develop our understanding of the psycho-social effects of sudden, large-scale casualties in cohesive social units. The work began with participant observation, and description of the processes of unit reconstitution and group recovery in the Army unit most directly affected by the Gander airline crash of 1985. Observations and interviews were conducted over the six-month period following the crash. Research findings from the Gander disaster are integrated with other data on the integration of replacements under highly stressful conditions to provide conclusions and recommendations for the effective reconstitution of units that experience major losses. Implications for training and preparation are also considered.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Findings showed that by inter-mixing replacements with veterans wherever possible, the social integration of replacements was facilitated, and restoration of overall unit cohesion was speeded. The timing of memorial services emerged as a critical variable in affecting individual and unit psychological recovery. Continuing memorial services beyond the 3-month point in this case slowed recovery for some unit members.

PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: The findings of this study provide important benchmarks for units that face similar reconstitution/recovery challenges in the future, whether as a result of losses in time of war or peace. As opportunities arise, concepts derived from this study will be applied and tested in other Army units. A follow-up study on the survivors of Task Force 3/502 is currently in the planning stages. This study will determine the long-term effects of the Gander tragedy on survivors, addressing questions of retention, adjustment, and performance.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Morale, Cohesion, and Health: Toward Conceptual Clarity and Measurement Precision

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: CPT Paul Bartone, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: October 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: October 1989.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This ongoing project uses a variety of data sources and analytic procedures to (1) develop an empirically-based conceptualization of the core military psychological constructs of morale and cohesion, and (2) refine a set of self-report measures based on these findings. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses are applied to various soldier survey samples of WRAIR in order to determine the major categories in which soldiers frame and interpret their experience. The effects of time-in-unit, geographic/strategic location, and unit type on the structuring of these constructs is explored.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: The project has led to greater conceptual precision in our understanding of soldier morale and cohesion, with conceptual schemas for these constructs that are firmly grounded in empirical data. This approach has allowed us to identify important contextual influences on how morale and cohesion are constructed in soldiers' minds, such as time-with-unit, and whether or not the unit is proximate to a potential adversary (e.g., Germany, Russia). Based on these empirically-grounded conceptual frameworks, new and more accurate scales of morale and cohesion are being developed and refined.

PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

More advanced model-testing procedures (e.g., LISREL IV) will be applied to ascertain the power and accuracy of morale and cohesion models identified so far. Also, various scale analysis procedures will allow morale and cohesion instruments to be fine-tuned. These state-of-the-art measures will then be incorporated into ongoing WRAIR studies of morale, cohesion, stress, and soldier attitudes being conducted around the world.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Leadership, Training, and Operational Readiness

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: CPT Paul Bartone, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: October 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: August 1989.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE- RESEARCH: This research explores the independent and interacting effects of leader characteristics, values, and behaviors, and training policies and practices on unit climate, morale, and performance indicators. A sample of 52 company commanders described factors they believed were important to unit combat success. These responses were scored according to accepted standards for quantifying open-ended data, and then related to average unit scores on measures of morale, unit climate, and well-being. Results contribute to a better understanding of the processes by which leaders foster excellence in their units.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Results show that leaders who emphasize psychological readiness and group training (e.g., "motivation"; "teamwork"; "sense of purpose") have units that score more highly on measures of morale, cohesion, and well-being. In contrast, commanders who place heavier emphasis on individual training and discipline, in most cases, have units that score low on these indicators of morale and unit social climate.

PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: Hypotheses generated from these results led to the construction of a new measure of leader values which was included in the 4th Iteration WRAIR UMS (Unit Manning System) survey of soldiers around the world. In the coming year, these data will be analyzed to determine if results from the exploratory study also hold in a large and representative sample of Army soldiers and leaders.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Stress, Coping, and Adjustment in Soldiers

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: CPT Paul Bartone, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: October 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: January 1990.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This project explores a variety of issues related to the adjustment of soldiers to the special demands and challenges of the soldier occupation. Survey data from the WRAIR UMS (Unit Manning System) Survey are utilized, as well as survey data on a battalion-sized group of soldiers in an Arctic climate. The impact of both person and situation variables on soldier performance and well being is investigated, drawing on a model that emphasizes person-environment fit. Throughout, special attention is devoted to locating organizational and individual resources that confer resistance to the ill-effects of various kinds of environmental and psycho-social stress.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: In addition to main-effects for occupational stress on health and well-being, results show that both personality commitment and subjective social support interact with stress to modulate (or worsen) the effects of stress. Soldiers who characteristically view their jobs as important and meaningful are less at risk for stress-related ailments. Under certain conditions that need to be elucidated further, this effect is enhanced by a subjective perception of available social supports.

PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: The availability of newly-collected panel data will allow more sophisticated analyses on both Arctic and UMS samples, controlling for baseline health levels and also reducing the influence of extraneous contaminating influences on the relation between stress and health (e.g., neurotic complaining, retrospective distortion) by employing a prospective study design.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Cohesion and Psychological Readiness in Combat Service Support Units of Light and non-Light Infantry Divisions

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Nancy L. Harrison. M.A.
Joseph M. Rothberg. Ph.D

PROJECT START DATE August 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 1990

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

1. To conduct the second phase of an investigation and analysis of the ways in which divisional structure and attributes unique to combat service support units relate to psychological readiness for combat.

2. To compare aspects of psychological readiness for combat in combat service support units and combat units.

3. To conduct the second phase of the investigation of the relationship of combat service support unit structure and composition and soldier characteristics to soldier well-being and psychological readiness for combat.

4. To investigate aspects of psychologioal readiness for combat in combat service support units longitudinally.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD

The second phase of a field investigation of cohesion in combat service support units was completed. This phase consisted of the collection of survey data from 2400 soldiers in the division support command (DISCOM) of a light and of a mech infantry division. Interviews in these divisions were also completed. They and the questionnaire focused on the relationships of combat service support soldiers with peers and leaders of their companies and the confidence they have in each other for success in war.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: The goal of the final research project is a report which will describe the social processes that underlie the patterns of cohesion in combat service support units and compare them with the patterns found in line units so that we know how to protect combat service support soldiers from psychological breakdown in war. The work will tell us what leadership training requirements are needed and will make recommendations for adjustments in unit structure.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Is Any Job Better Than No Job at All? The Social Psychological Fffects of Underemployment on Women

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Jeannette R. Ickovics, M.A.

PROJECT START DATE: April 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: August 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: Spouse employment continues to be a very important issue for military family policy. Military wives have long been subject to labor force underutilization, taking jobs which are inadequate with respect to hours worked, wages paid or utilization of education and skills. This study was designed to examine the effects of underemployment on the well-being and health of Army wives. Effects on Army families and the Army community were also assessed. The data were gathered through self-administered mail questionnaires completed by 325 Army wives.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: This study examined various forms of employment, underemployment, and non-employment in order to determine the effects on: (a) the mental and physical health of Army wives (including, but not limited to, effects on self-esteem, depression, chronic physical illness and health care utilization), (b) Army families (economic and marital well-being) and (c) the Army community as a whole (measured by spouse's satisfaction with the military and her desire for husband to re-enlist). Major findings and policy implications were addressed.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: NCO Career Histories

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: COL Larry H. Ingraham, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: May 1986

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: September 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: Stress factors among non-commissioned officers was examined by means of tape recorded career histories. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) schools were asked to nominate one senior NCO who could represent the technical area and who could describe the experience of becoming a sergeant. Seventeen career history narratives have been recorded and four have been transcribed

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Transcriptions completed December 1988. Delays in contracting for transcription services have delayed data analysis. Some progress has been made in setting up computer software for taxonomic and search routines necessary for the analysis phase. A transcription contract has been let and transcription is proceeding rapidly. Preliminary data analysis is in progress.

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WRAIR RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: The Family Stress and Coping: A Prospective Study of New Mothers and their Families.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: MAJ Peter S. Jensen, M.D.
LTC Kent Plowman, M.D.
MAJ S. Peter Kim, M.D.
MAJ Fred Garland, Ph.D.

PROJECT START-UP DATE: August 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: December 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This project involves the longitudinal assessment of 140 families, selected in the first trimester of the mother's pregnancy, to determine factors affecting good outcome and adjustment to the birth of a child. Repeated assessments of the family stressors, mother's and father's coping mechanisms, availability and nature of social supports, marital functioning, and each parent's psychological symptoms are obtained (at 4 points over an 18-month period), as well a health utilization measures and health status on each family member (mother, father and child). In particular, utilizing a cross-lagged panel design, this study will attempt to determine which factors predict baby's optimal growth and development and family coping during the first year after the baby's birth. Because an equal number of active duty mothers and dependent mothers will be enrolled in the study, it will be possible to examine the effects of the new baby on the female soldier's job performance (and military readiness), as well the male soldier's military performance.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Fifty additional subjects (now 80 total) subjects have been enrolled, and data on each of these subjects is about 50% complete gathered. No analysis has yet been completed. Three abstracts for poster presentations at the Southeastern Psychological Association Meeting have been prepared and submitted.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: This information will be potentially useful to help Army Community Service planners understand which community supports and resources are most helpful in enhancing longitudinal adaptation and coping in the military member and his/her family in the event of the birth of a first child. This information may allow program and policy planners to more effectively target resources to subgroups who most need them and can benefit from them; the information may lead to enhanced family wellness, improved readiness and military life satisfaction, and decreased utilization of scare resources.

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WRAIR RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: Life Stress and Family Functioning: An Empiric Study of the Frequency and Effects of Stressful Life Events on Military Children and Families.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: MAJ Peter S. Jensen, M.D.
LTC Michael Bain, M.D.

PROJECT START-UP DATE: August, 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: December, 1988

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This project involves the item-by-item analysis of the relative frequency of stressful life events in a sample of community sample of 200 military children, and an examination of the relative contribution of discrete events to child and family psychiatric symptoms. This study has significant strengths over previous studies that have based the relative weighting of stressful life events on teachers', parents', or other adults' estimation of the amount of life change/stress the event would present to a child. No previous studies have examined the actual relationship between the occurrence of the presumed stressful events and actual child behavioral and emotional symptoms. In contrast, this study will directly examine these relationships and attempt to develop new weighting schemes for discrete life events. Also, the frequency of the presumed stressful events will be compared with a psychiatric clinical sample, and the frequency of the stressful events occurring in the clinical sample will also be used to develop alternative weights for each stress item. Commonalities will be sought between the two weighting schemes, a new life events weighting scheme developed, and the new instrument will be tested on new samples.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Life events stress data from 100 additional clinical sample subjects (bringing the total to over 400 subjects now) has been gathered and scored and entered. Analysis has been completed, and the final manuscript will be completed with final results by December, 1988.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED: This information will be potentially useful to help Army Community Service planners understand which stressful events most commonly occur in military families and the power of the effects of these stressors on child and family functioning. This information could be most helpful in developing primary and secondary prevention programs for families undergoing certain stresses. This information may allow program and policy planners to more effectively target resources to subgroups who most need them and can benefit from them; the information may lead to enhanced family wellness, improved readiness, and military life satisfaction.

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WRAIR RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: A Comparison of Clinical and Community Samples of Military Children in Symptoms, Functioning, and Background Risk Factors

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: MAJ Peter S. Jensen, M.D.
MAJ Perry Wolf, D.S.W.
CPT James Degroot, Ph.D.
LTC Michael Bain, M.D.

PROJECT START-UP DATE: August, 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: December, 1988

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This project involves the comparison of family member symptoms and background factors in a community sample (200 military children) vs a clinical sample (500 military children). An attempt will be made to determine which background factors predispose to the development of psychiatric symptoms and seeking out psychiatric care. Also, background and contextual factors will be examined to determine which factors may protect/buffer and child and family from dysfunction.

MAJOR PROJECTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Data from 400 clinical sample subjects has been gathered and scored (bringing the total clinical and community sample to 700). Analysis is completed, and the final manuscript will be completed by December 1988.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED: This information may be potentially useful to help Army Community Service planners understand which contextual and background factors predispose as well as protect military families from psychosocial dysfunction. This information could be helpful in developing primary and secondary prevention programs for military families. This information may allow program and policy planners to more effectively target resources to subgroups who most need them and can benefit from them; the information may lead to enhanced family wellness, improved readiness, and military life satisfaction.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

WRAIR RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: Family Types, Military Performance, and Life Stress.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: MAJ Peter S. Jensen, M.D.,
MAJ Perry Wolf, Ph.D.
LTC Michael Bain, M.D.

PROJECT START-UP DATE: August 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: August 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This project involves the analysis of family symptoms from a community sample (200 military families) and a clinical sample (500 military children) to determine which family patterns contribute to "hardiness" and adaptation to the military environment. The purpose of this project will be to determine the feasibility of developing a "typology" of families' functioning.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED IN THIS PERIOD: Data from 400 clinical sample subjects has been gathered and scored, bringing the total to 700 families enrolled with information entered into the computer. Literature reviews on the topic are proceeding. Analysis has not yet begun, pending completion of the literature review.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED: This information may be potentially useful to help Army Community Service planners understand which family "types" do well in the face of military and other life stressors. This information could be helpful in developing primary and secondary prevention programs for military families, and may help better screen families and soldiers before stressful assignments. This information may allow program and policy planners to more effectively target resources to subgroups who most need them. It is hoped that a "typology" of families can be developed that will enable reasonable determinations about a family's ability to tolerate military stressors.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Interaction Between Units, Families, and Drill Sergeants' Performance

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Pearl Katz, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: July 1987

COMPLETION DATE: June 1990

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of the study was to examine the natural history of the adaptational processes, social network participation, and perceptions of stress of drill sergeants and their spouses as they participated in their family life, Drill Sergeant School and drill sergeant duty. Thirty drill sergeant families (32 drill sergeants and 26 spouses) were studied, during their first year of drill sergeant duty, beginning with their admission to Drill Sergeant School. Participant-observation and intensive open-ended (4-6 hours each) interviewing were the principal methodologies.

PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: At this midway point in the project,the results indicate that drill sergeant duty is stressful for most families. All drill sergeants who are not in AIT or in exceptionally well-integrated and supportive units feel physically and emotionally fatigued during most of their tour. The drill sergeant has little waking time to spend with family members. The drill sergeants' and their spouses' perceptions of the soldiers' fatigue, of the sleep and wake cycles and of the stressful emotional demands affect all family members. Virtually all family members evaluate these negative percecptions as more salient than the postive aspecs of drill sergeant duty. A number of marriage, family and unti factors affect the family members' perceptions of drill sergeant duty stress. Some of the factors that minimize the stress include units which are well-integrated and supportive of the family, couples who have been married a long time, spouses who were used to frequent absences in the past, and couples whose networks are segregated where the spouse has supportive networks.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: Next fiscal year, the families' adaptation during the latter half of their drill sergeant tour will be examined to determine if the stresses increase or are ameliorated over time, and if their adaptational strategies, perceptions, and social networks change. In addition, another training base will be selected to focus on those drill sergeants who are experiencing greater stress, and their interactions with the mental health teams to alleviate stress within their work context.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Behavioral Correlates of Survey Research

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Faris R. Kirkland

PROJECT START DATE: January 1986

COMPLETION DATE: March 1988

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: To identify and describe behavior between leaders and subordinates and among peers, associated with scores on constructs of the Soldier Survey (vertical cohesion, unit social climate, confidence in command, and general well being). To develop causal relationships between leader behavior and the scores and between leader behavior and performance of the unit on mission-related tasks.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED:

The concentrically validated findings of this research demonstrated that leaders whose behavior empowers subordinates, who know their profession in detail and share their interest and knowledge with subordinates, who accept and sustain close personal and professional relationships with subordinates, who tell subordinates the truth, who listen seriously to their subordinates and who do not punish them for telling bad news and who clearly assign their subordinates' personal, professional and familial welfare priority equivalent to the mission, have cohesive, competent, and enthusiatstic units. The research also demonstrated that U. S. Army culture places obstacles in the way of leaders behaving in these ways through denigration of intellectual activity, taboos against fraternization, substitution of an expectation of "can do" from subordinates for superiors assuming responsibility for establishing priorities and a tradition of fear of both subordinates and superiors.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: The American Soldier in the All-Volunteer Force in the 1980s

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Faris R. Kirkland

PROJECT START DATE: April 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: 30 June 1988

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

Secondary analysis of survey data and participant observation data in the 7th Infantry Division and other units to describe how causal relationships between leader behavior and combat readiness are mediated by my military culture developed during the all-volunteer era and before. Case study of the shortfall between policy objectives and accomplishments in the 7th Infantry Division placing quantitative and qualitative data in historical and cultural perspectives.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

The evaluation of light infantry units revealed that they came close to achieving the objectives set for them. The shortfall was not because of want of energy or dedication, but lack of intellectual preparation and Army cultural values that supplanted positive leadership approaches when the going got rough. The lesson from the light infantry is that Army culture needs to be brought up to date using the officer career development system and the Chief of Staff's commitment to strengthening superior-subordinate relations and adapting reward contingencies to the needs of the Army of the 1990s.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Study of the American Soldier

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Faris R. Kirkland

PROJECT START DATE: July 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 1990

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: Investigate the evolution of human relations in the U.S. Army from the 19th century to the present. Integrate data from archives, memoirs, policy documents, surveys and observational data to identify and describe the development of relationships between leaders and followers, as mediated by evolving military culture, from the immediate post-colonial period through the Civil War, emergence of the U.S. as a great power, and the wars of the 20th Century.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED: To date, research has focussed on human relations policy and praxis in the 19th and 20th centuries. The principal sources are regulations, guides for officers and NCOs, memoirs and quasi-official periodicals. Findings so far indicate that policy from 1800 until 1920 was for command to be paternalistic and solicitous toward subordinates. Leadership as a concept did not exist. Materiel and supplies were more valued than personnel. This research has so far led to articles and presentations on human relations and social traditions in European armies in the 19th and 20th centuries, on unit-family relations in the contemporary U. S. Army and the cross-cultural effects of authoritarianism on military success in the 20th century.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Unit Manning System Human Dimensions Field Evaluation Survey

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: David H. Marlowe, Ph.D.
CPT Mark A. Vaitkus, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: March 1985

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: February 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: This research was undertaken to meet a Department of the Army mandate to collect attitudinal data measuring changes in "human dimensions" related to the implementation of the COHORT (Cohesion, Operational Readiness, and Training) component of the New Manning System. Specifically, the objective was to assess cohesion, morale, and other psychosocial factors related to combat readiness over the three-year life cycle of COHORT or personnel-stabilized units. A longitudinal survey was designed to tap such factors in 135 companies/batteries of the combat arms, including twelve COHORT or personnel-stabilized battalions and seven traditional (individual) personnel replacement battalions matched by unit type and location.

WORK COMPLETED AND PLANNED:

Five waves of survey data were collected in the sample units from May 1985 to December 1987. All data have been coded, cleaned, and are now stored on computer disk files. Transference of the files to magnetic tape for archival purposes has begun. In addition, personnel record data from TAPA have been successfully merged with waves three and four. Preliminary analyses have been completed for all five waves, resulting in briefing packages prepared for ODCSPER, USAMRDC, OTSG, TRADOC, and the Army Chief of Staff. Presentations of the data have also been delivered at the Center for Army Leadership and the American Psychological Association, and accepted for publication in the Journal of Military Psychology and Basic and Applied Social Psychology. A final technical report for Army-wide distribution is scheduled for release in early spring 1989. Lessons learned in the course of this research, both substantive and methodological, are now being incorporated into a proposed study of leadership practices and current personnel replacement strategies within COHORT units. A series of volumes based on the data and documenting the social dynamics of the All-Volunteer Force in the 1980s has been outlined.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS:

1. Survey responses can be used to construct reliable measures

of psychological readiness for combat both at the individual level (e.g. military self-esteem) as well as the group level (e.g. unit confidence in leaders and horizontal cohesion). The individual vs. group level distinction is validated by variance components analyses that show significant unit variation on measures tapping perceptions of the social climate and little or no unit variation on measures of self-perception. As predicted, however, the measure of military self-esteem shows the highest correlation with general psychological well-being (GWB).

2. Scale scores over time suggest Army norms slightly above the neutral point for military self-esteem, just at neutral for horizontal cohesion, and slightly below neutral for leadership climate. Such scores are at least one standard deviation below those found in a separate departmental study of Ranger units. Officers and first sergeants have scale scores that are significantly higher than other unit members with little variation across units.

3. Perceptions of leadership climate, e.g. reports of leaders' concern for subordinates and confidence in officers' and NCOs' combat skills, are highly unit-specific over time. In general, however, airborne and armor units have the highest horizontal cohesion scores and field artillery the lowest. There are no consistent differences in cohesion between HQ and line units or between those assigned to USAREUR versus CONUS. Married soldiers report slightly lower cohesion scores, especially with respect to off-duty associations with unit members.

4. COHORT and personnel-stabilized units score significantly higher than the control units on all measures except GWB six to ten months after unit formation, in some cases within one standard deviation of Ranger means. There is a decline on all scale means for COHORT units over time, both cross-sectionally and for the panel, such that they are marginally below those of the controls within six to ten months of unit disestablishment. The erosion, however, is far more precipitous for the junior enlisted perceptions of leadership climate than horizontal cohesion, especially in light infantry and armor units. (The deterioration of leadership climate in the light infantry has been independently documented by departmental researchers.) There is no significant difference between COHORT and conventional units on perceptions of leadership quality by the second survey, but the former retain higher levels of horizontal cohesion until the fourth survey. Moreover, for any given level of perceived leadership concern over time, COHORT and personnel-stabilized units generally demonstrate higher horizontal cohesion.

5. Part of the loss in horizontal cohesion must be attributed to continual personnel turbulence in COHORT units. Though such turbulence was comparatively higher in the conventional units, over time the percentage of soldiers in COHORT units who knew each other from IET dropped sharply. The stabilization of the

NCO cadre was even less successful, and for officers practically nonexistent.

6. Interview data reveal that expressions of solidarity and social bonding diminish among COHORT soldiers in anticipation of unit disestablishment and the imminent loss of buddies. Nevertheless, if war came, they would still rather go into combat in the company of one another. Horizontal cohesion scores fall for all soldiers the greater the number of months they are in their company due to the waning of the high expectational bias they bring with them from basic training. (Scores also fall with rank progression from E1 to E4.) However, compared with that small segment of junior enlisted soldiers who have remained in conventional units over 24 months, similarly tenured COHORT soldiers retain higher scores at the fourth survey. Likewise, largely because of their common IET experience, COHORT soldiers with less than six months in their units display higher horizontal cohesion scores than equally new soldiers in control units at the time of the first survey. On the other hand, individual soldiers who entered as new members of COHORT units later in the life cycle report scores no higher than new control unit members.

7. The value of horizontal cohesion at any point in time is demonstrated by its role, along with confidence in NCOs, as a significant predictor in multivariate models of junior enlisted willingness to go to war with their small unit. The present study confirms the importance of COHORT as one social structural contributor to such horizontal cohesion especially, at later points in the life cycle, when its effect is taken net of the leadership climate.

8. Excluding the light infantry, COHORT first-termers reenlisted at the same rates as members of conventional units. However, reenlistment rates were at least 10% higher in units whose leadership climate scores were at the 33rd percentile or above. Soldiers in units with higher leadership climate scores by definition were more likely to believe that unit officers and NCOs "knew their stuff" and were interested in the soldiers' personal welfare. In addition, they were more likely to report that they got praise and recognition for doing a particularly good job, and that their leaders took into account their suggestions or ideas.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Precipitants of Dysfunction Among Body Handlers

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: LTC James E. McCarroll, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: July 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: Personnel who must observe and handle human remains as a part of their job during or immediately after the occurrence of a casualty-producing event are known to be at high risk for for stress reactions. There are several categories of personnel have the responsibility of recovering or otherwise working with human remains such as body handlers, pathologists, police, investigators, lawyers, morticians, and search and rescue personnel. The objective of this research was to provide important information on how experienced body handlers cope with the stress of handling remains and prepare themselves and others for this job. We are looking for the precipitants of dysfunction, the experiences that overwhelm through processes of identification or prevention of it that protect the individual against breakdown on the site as well as after the job is finished.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Interviews were conducted with several categories of personnel who have the responsibility of recovering or otherwise working with human remains such as pathologists, body handlers, police and fire, emergency service, special operations, morticians, search and rescue personnel, and students in graves registration. A special vulnerability of all is to childrens' bodies. It does not seem to matter whether the viewer has children or the age of the viewer. This vulnerability seems not to adapt. The issue of "psychological closeness" to the deceased is a risk factor. Such closeness may be from the thought of a friend or relative, a "brother in uniform" or the idea "it could be me." The issue of breakdown was difficult to assess because there is a high degree of self-selection for this work; however, the experienced personnel all had a way of avoiding "involvement" during the work. The use of professionalism during the task helps; personal reflections come later. Support comes primarily from the work group, if at all. No one talked to family or friends other than work mates or neighbors. Well functioning groups talk to each other, but this is limited to technical aspects of the work. Alcohol is usually involved in the aftermath of operations for the less technical personnel. The approach to training for new personnel depends on the field and the time available. When there is a lot of time, training proceeds slowly; when there is little time, one approach

that was suggested was to tell the people the worst immediately allowing for no surprises. Primary psycholog-ical mechanisms involved in this work are sensory, particularly the reception of unusual, offensive and overwhelming sensory input.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: Paper for professional journal on the mechanisms of function and dysfunction in body handling. Preparation of training tape for Army Graves Registration School and Center.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Reciprocal Nature of Work and Family: Spouse's Perception of the Work/Family Interface and Its Impact on Soldier's Retention.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Linda L. Z. Moghadam

PROJECT START DATE: October 1986

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of the present research was an examination of the relationship between the military and the family. Specifically, this research looked at the impact of structural and social-psychological aspects of the military experience, its impact on the way spouses viewed the compatibility of military and family life and the consequences these attitudes have on the soldier's retention.

The group studied was a matched subsample of 121 junior enlisted soldiers and their wives who took part in the Unit Manning System Field Evaluation (UMSFE) and the Unit Manning System Family Health Survey. The data for the research were gathered at three points in time. Time 1 data, which included information about soldiers' personal morale, scheduling and unit emotional climate, were gathered from the soldiers during the third wave of data collection for the UMSFE. Time 2 data, which included spousal atttitudes towards scheduling, leadership, and the family life that is possible within the army, as well as the spouse's attitude toward her husband's reenlistment, were gathered from wives of these soldiers through the UMSFHS two to four months after the wave 3 soldier data was collected. Time 3 data, soldiers' subsequent reenlistment behavior, were obtained from military personnel records made available by TAPA (Total Army Personnel Agency).

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: Preliminary analysis of this data indicates that there is a strong and significant relationship between a wife's attitude toward her husband's staying in the Army and his subsequent reenlistment behavior. Seventy-seven percent of those soldiers whose wives thought they should leave the Army failed to reenlist. Conversely, 71% of those soldiers whose wives felt that their husbands should stay in did, in fact, reenlist. Those whose wives expressed uncertainty on this subject were similar to those whose wives supported their husbands' reenlistment.

Of equal important are the determinants of this attitude. The spouses's perception of a measure we call the work/family interface, measuring the degree to which the spouse perceives military and family life to mesh, is the most important predictor

of wife's attitude toward whether or not her husband should stay in the Army. The more positive the response of the wife to the compatibility of military and family life, the more likely she is to respond that her husband should not get out. Seventy-three percent of those who scored high on the military/family interface scale said that their husbands should not get out. While 45% of those who scored in the lowest third of this scale reported that they should get out immediately.

The perception of the military/family interface on the part of the wife was in turn significantly influenced by her satisfaction with leadership and her satisfaction with husband's schedule. Of particular interest here, is the fact that long hours, and days away were not significant in predicting either leadership satisfaction or satisfaction with scheduling. Wives appear to accept these features of military life as a given. The factor that significantly predicts satisfaction in these areas is predictability of husband's schedule, a factor that should in many, if not most, cases be amenable to manipulation.

These early analyses suggest the importance of the influence of family support on the retention of military personnel. More complex multivariate analyses currently being done, that go beyond these simple bivariate relationships, continue to support these findings while controlling for other relevant factors.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: Expected completion of multivarite analysis and doctoral dissertation - February 1989.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Environmental and Psychological Factors in Reactions to Apartments and Mobile Homes

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Paul B. Paulus, Ph.D.
Dinesh Nagar, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: October 1985

COMPLETION DATE: January 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of this project was to develop an understanding of the role of housing in the health, well-being and social life of enlisted Army families living off-base. Although surveys suggested that housing satisfaction was a major concern of families, little was known about features of housing that related to satisfaction and importance of housing satisfaction relative to other sources of concern such as the job and the family. This study focussed on determining the impact of different hypes of housing (apartment or mobile home), the overall environmental quality of the housing and the psychological and social factors related to adjustment in different types of housing.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD: The reactions of Army families living in mobile home parks and apartment complexes to their housing were assessed. Apartments were rated somewhat more attractive, but mobile homes were rated as quieter and more home-like. There were no differences in feelings of crowding, privacy, and overall satisfaction. Higher environmental quality was related to more positive evaluations, but had little impact in mobile home parks. Psychological factors wuch as degree of housing choice, comparison of present housing with past housing or that of friends, and expectation of impending improvement in housing had strong effects on housing satisfaction. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings were discussed.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Unit Manning System Family Health Study

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Leora Rosen, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: November 1985

TARGET COMPLETION DATE: December 1988

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH DURING THIS PERIOD: The main purpose of this study was to examine the impact of military life stress on the general well being and quality of life of military wives. The study also sought to understand the role of social support in mediating this stress, and the impact of wives attitudes towards the military on the retention and morale of soldiers.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

Social support from other military wives acts as a significant buffer against the stress of husbands' absence due to field duty.

Officers' wives had significantly more support than enlisted wives in all types of units, but junior enlisted wives in COHORT units had more support than those in non-COHORT units.

Using a path analytic model, we demonstrated that being an officer's wife was related to perceived social support only indirectly through its influence on degree of participation in wives' group activities and was the only significant predictor of social supports.

Using factor analysis and multiple regression techniques, it was found that the domains of marriage, family life and personal health had the most significant impact on the well being and quality of life of military wives. Domains related to satisfaction with various aspects of military life were also significantly related to well being. Satisfaction with the domain of employment played only a minor role in the quality of life of NCO wives, and did not appear to be important for junior enlisted or officers' wives

Wives' attitudes toward leadership in husbands' units had a significant and direct impact on husbands' morale for NCO couples and a significant, but indirect effect for junior enlisted couples. In the case of the latter group, wives' attitudes influenced husbands' perceptions of the compatibility of Army and family life, which in turn influenced their personal morale.

Analyses were also conducted on the prevalence of premenstrual symptoms among military wives, as well as the prevalence of seasonal affective disorder.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR: Write up of results.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Thematic Analysis of Comment Sheets of Annual Survey of Army Families - 1987

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Florence Rosenberg, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: October 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: March 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: To analyze volunteered comments sheets of ASAF survey in order to determine:

1. Major issues

2. Positive/negative valence

3. Association between issues and rank and CONUS or OCONUS location.

4. Suggestions for future ASAF surveys

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

1. Development of category coding of substantive themes and coding manual.

2. Methodology - data entry on VAX computer is being worked out at present.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

Report should be completed covering times 1-4 above.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Wife of the First Term Enlisted Soldier

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Florence Rosenberg, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: April 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: July 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH: To study adaptation and socialization of first term wives to the military; i.e., how norms of military life are learned and internalized, perceptions of role of army wife; major stresses and methods of coping, especially utilization of social support; attitudes toward military life and to the U. S. Army.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

1. Data collected at two posts through intensive interviews with 44 respondents.

2. Report describing results of interviews and summarizing major themes and generalizations.

3. Re-interviews completed with most of respondents (77%) 10-15 months after initial interviews.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

1. Report on follow-up interviews describing life events, effectiveness of adaptation and socialization, changes in attitudes and, in general, well-being.

2. Submission of paper focusing on role to a professional society.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Study of Military Spouses

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Florence Rosenberg, Ph.D.
Robert J. Ursano, M. D.,
USUHS

PROJECT START DATE: September 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: July 1990

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

This study is in the early stages of development in terms of identifying research questions and variables to be studied. We are proposing a survey of spouses representing all military services emphasizing stress and coping, social supports, roles and adjustment disorders. The basic interest is in individual adjustment and factors which influence it.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

Protocol is currently being prepared.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

Development of a survey instrument to measure variables listed above including psychological and psycho-social scales. Date for beginning of data collection is uncertain at this time.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Suicide in the Military

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Joseph M. Rothberg, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: 1975

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: Ongoing

DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

To assess the current state of suicide prevention in the Army as summarized by descriptions of the Army's suicide prevention program and its history. To determine the recent trends in the rate of suicide in relation to the implementation of the suicide prevention program. To review the area of suicide as a community phenomenon and determine the implications for future research in that area. To develop information on the specific components which must be integrated into a comprehensive, unified suicide prevention program.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

A major portion of the research on suicide in the military has been an identification of some areas of the suicide prevention program which have problems. The missing or incomplete program areas dealing with suicides include:

1. A population-based data system for determination of the rates of suicide and suicide attempts among active duty personnel and family members at the level of the military unit or local community. Some current problems are: (a) suicides are routinely reported for active duty personnel, but revisions to the mode of death made more than six weeks beyond the initial determination may not catch up with the prior data; (b) data on suicides are not routinely collected for family members; (c) suicide attempts are not uniformly reported for either active duty personnel or their family members.

2. An evaluation component to review the efforts to respond to suicides. Some current problems are: (a) Department of Defense policy does not provide explicit guidance to the services with regard to suicide; (b) there is no assessment of the coverage of the training being done to incorporate suicide prevention as a component of leadership; (c) there is no assessment of the intervention efforts which respond to clusters of suicides and suicide attempts in an effort to interrupt the contagion; (d) there is no assessment of the postvention care provided to the survivors who are at increased risk themselves for suicide or other problems.

3. A formal research effort to support long-term analysis of the impacts of suicide and suicide attempts on the military community, as well as the impact of military policies on special populations. Some current problems are: (a) the relation of suicide to other deviant behaviors as a reliable social indicator of a disordered community is not well documented; (b) the psychosocial mechanisms of clustering and epidemics in the Army have not been studied or coordinated with current civilian research in adolescent and young adult suicide prevention; (c) epidemiological follow-up data for suicide and other indicators is not currently available for special populations such as suicide attemptors, HIV/AIDS cases, individuals with mental disease, substance abusers, survivors or disasters or those under high stress.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

Application of epidemiologic findings on suicide toward implementing DCSPER initiatives through the Army Suicide Prevention Council.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Small Unit Leadership Study

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: LTC Robert J. Schneider, Ph.D.
David H. Marlowe, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: July 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 1990

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

Extensive research with COHORT and non-COHORT companies demonstrated the importance of small unit leadership in determining the morale, cohesion and psychological readiness of soldiers. Most surveys and studies of such leader behavior have focused on attitudes about leadership or leadership characteristics and traits. This study is designed to enumerate actual leader behaviors at the small unit level which contribute to "psychologically ready" units. It will lead to training and doctrine modifications which will enhance the combat capability of the forces.

MAJOR PRODUCT COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

Preliminary (pilot) interviews of soldiers and leaders were begun. Questions to be included in a survey of small unit leader behavior are being compiled.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

Following completion of pilot data collection, a questionnaire and interview protocol will be completed. Formal data collection is not scheduled to begin until late Spring, 1989. This study will include follow-up of selected units, and data collection will not be completed until the following fiscal year (1991).

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Package Replacements in the U.S. Army

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: LTC Robert J. Schneider, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: July 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

The U.S. Army has implemented a system in which small groups of replacement soldiers are assigned to certain combat units. These soldiers are referred to as package replacements. It is important to determine whether there are advantages to the Army for such a system, in terms of enhancing cohesion within these replacement packages, whether the program decreases the stress of being a new replacement, and whether such soldiers experience any additional problems integrating into their new units. Also, it is important to know the optimal group size, as well as any factors which would mitigate against the acceptance of such groups by small unit leaders.

MAJOR PRODUCT COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

All data, including interviews within eight combat battalions and surveys of those battalions, have been collected and analyzed. Interpretation and write-up is in progress.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

A final report will be completed and distributed in Spring, 1989

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Army Families in Change

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: LTC Robert J. Schneider, Ph.D.
Joel Teitelbaum, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: May 1988

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH

This project is to complete a book about Army families. The book will provide an integrated analysis of studies that have been completed in the Department of Military Psychiatry and provide a rationale for enhanced attention to and organization of spouses of military members.

MAJOR PRODUCT COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

An in-depth outline of all book chapters is completed. Authors have been selected and writing is in progress. The first three chapters, which set the stage for the remaining work, are 80 per cent completed.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

This book will be completed in Summer, 1989.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Family-Community and Soldier Stress Dimensions in Light Infantry Division Development of COHORT Unit Training and Readiness.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Joel M. Teitelbaum, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: August, 1985

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: January 1990

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

This research effort is the family/community component of a human dimensions field study of the Light Infantry Concept. The investigation was intended to describe and explain family member and soldier behavior and perceptions of unit level and life stressors in the context of developing a new, high performance infantry division (7th IDL). Qualitative and quantitative data collection on-site followed the three year Unit Manning System life cycle of COHORT combat arms units and the progress of installation community programs and family support efforts at Fort Ord, CA.

Army family-related practices were observed in relation to soldier marriage, household formation and child-rearing patterns associated with unit training schedules and duties in a personnel stabilized post environment. A key purpose in this study of family issues was to evaluate how family factors contribute to or detract from soldier combat readiness and unit cohesion under conditions of intensive military stress. Another purpose was to demonstrate how unit leadership and Army community culture impact family well being and the psychological resilience of soldiers.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

The initial products were scientific observations of the family dimensions of light infantry COHORT unit life. Findings were reported on Army community support for families of light infantry soldiers by the unit chain of command and installation services. The results during this period included analyses of quantitative, longitud-inal data on family formation and demographic change over the course of the three year COHORT unit life cycle. The study identified major military sources of stress affecting family life adversely: unpredictable duty hours, frequent training deploy-ments, unit leadership turbulence and lack of understanding on the part of the chain of command of soldiers' family needs, especially for junior enlisted and junior NCO families. Relentless training schedules and declining family well being were correlated over the course of the unit life cycle. Family member dissatisfaction was also linked to small unit leadership practices and deterioration of unit social climate.

The establishment of installation and unit-based systems of family support were observed and analysed in terms of enlisted family member perceptions and their utilization by families under stress. Positive impacts on spouse well being were associated with quality of housing, access to the post, and opportunities for family time with the soldier. Major findings included the positive impacts of early welcome and orientation of groups of arriving families by small unit leaders and appropriate Army community program agencies. Availability of soldier time for family settling in at the new post was found to be very beneficial in initial adjustment of wives and children. Positive identification of family members with the soldier's unit aided family adaptation to the fast paced training schedules that mounted in intensity over the course of the unit life cycle. Three year COHORT stabilization of personnel in units at post was found to shape a pattern of family formation and household residence (on or off post) and the development of informal networks of family member support relationships. Development of Family Support Groups at the unit level to welcome and assist new arrivals helped create positive identification with the unit mission and cooperation among spouses across all ranks, including enlisted spouses. Emphasis by unit and community leaders on group welcoming of younger junior enlisted COHORT soldiers and their wives at the outset of a COHORT unit life cycle was effective in promoting family member adaptation and family-unit cohesion. Large numbers of junior enlisted who married during their first term and late arriving families of junior NCOs lacked unit-led social supports and experienced increased psycho-social isolation and distress. Division and small unit chain of command organizational practices affected soldier performance and unit cohesion and readiness throughout the unit life cycle. These leadership decisions and behaviors had make-or-break impacts on family satisfaction and retention of trained married soldiers at the end of the COHORT unit life cycle.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

The major areas of research analysis and guidance to be developed during the next fiscal year include:

(1) Impacts of rapid family formation and child-rearing on Light Infantry unit cohesion and family commitment.
(2) Effects of COHORT unit stabilization and turbulence on family well being and stress coping.
(3) Perceptions of single soldiers in units increasingly dominated by marriage and family issues about their well being and future in the Army.
(4) Impacts on single soldier morale and cohesion of barracks living versus marriage and family household life of their peers.
(5) Perceptions of distress, attitudes and behavioral responses by family members toward command-mandated volunteering of spouses for unit and division Family Support Groups (FSGs).
(6) "Fraternization" avoidance among unit spouses.
(7) Guidance for unit leaders and community family support

systems for leadership of small units with regard to family well being in relation to soldier readiness and group cohesion, with implications for retention of quality family soldiers.
(8) Recommendations for schooling of small unit leaders, division wide commanders, and installation community family support program managers as well as volunteer family members involved in support efforts at the unit level.

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RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Adustment and Adaptation of Enlisted Family Members to Separation from Soldiers during Unit Deployments.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Joel M. Teitelbaum, Ph.D.

PROJECT START DATE: March 1987

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: August 1989

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

The purpose of this research was to characterize and compare family members and soldier adjustment to and coping with periods of unit deployment for short term and extended missions. The study focused on infantry soldiers and their resident family members at CONUS posts from which units deployed on extended peacekeeping missions overseas and no-notice training or combat-oriented missions. The investigation concentrated on unit chain of command and Army community attention to family well-being and the problems faced by family members surrounding the period of deployment. The findings were intended to provide a knowledge base for the Army on family-unit relations and community responses to deployment separation and to prepare guidelines for managing family stressors associated with deployment. The goal was to provide a scientific basis for Army leaders to help families cope with deployment separation stress and to maintain soldier combat readiness and unit performance during and after deployment missions.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED DURING THIS PERIOD:

The major findings thus far include results on the responses of numerous Army families to the experience of short and extended deployment conditions while living on or near the CONUS installation as part of the local Army community. Mechanisms for aiding the initial adjustment of family members and soldiers to unit mission separation, and adaptation of families to repeated and extended periods of soldier deployment were discovered through these studies. They include:

1) the beneficial effects in moderating family distress by means of two-way communication initiated by unit leaders using a variety of media to reach family members and soldiers. Pre-deployment preparation of families by unit leaders through family briefings, written information, and training for the expected stresses of soldier absence make for increased levels of functional adjustment and active coping by waiting wives.

2) Family Support Groups (FSGs) backed by unit commanders and formed at the small unit level among spouses across the ranks are effective volunteer associations for positive identification

by family members with the unit deployment mission and for sharing effective methods for coping with the separation among spouses. Spousal participation in FSG activites peaks in the circum-deployment period and spontaneously declines to a lower sustainment level during periods of garrison duty. This process of interactive family support should not be forced to continue via formalized meetings and events when it is not needed. Mandatory FSG participation results in volunteer "burnout" and family member dissaffection as well fear of "fraternization".

3)Spouse autonomy and individual coping capacity tend to rise during extended periods of soldier deployment among stabilized, and well-informed families. Spouses experiencing the greatest levels of separation distress are often those with pre-existing family dysfunctions and marital problems that have gone unresolved. Wives often change residence, travel across country on vacation, and some find jobs during their soldier husband's absence. Initiation of pregnancy during the pre-deployment period is not unusual among unit enlisted families.

4) Rapid, reliable and frequent long-distance communications between waiting families and deployed soldiers has a beneficial effect on family member adjustment and separation coping by maintaining the soldier's presence in the family. Constructive communications contribute to positive reunion relationships when the soldier returns home, and a higher level of readiness.

5) Active unit leadership and Army community support for families through provision of accessible telephone, radio, postal, and video communications promotes family identification with the unit deployment mission and raises psychological tolerance among family members for the separation period. Reunion stress can be minimized by active unit/FSG training and preparation of family members and deployed soldiers for reintegration into family life.

MAJOR PRODUCTS EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR:

Information bearing on the following problems:

(1) Availability of family under soldier and spouse control as a mediator of enlisted family member and soldier adjustment.
(2) Stressful effects of unexpected soldier and unit mission requirements immediately upon return from an extended deployment
(3) Effects on retention of married soldiers after a period of frequent and/or extended deployment separation.
(4) Leadership climate in units and the family's perception of well-being during periods of deployment separation.

SGRD-UWI-A 30 September 1988

RESEARCH ACTIVITY SUMMARY REPORT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Extended Separation Experiences of Army Wives

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Linda Truitt, M. A.
LTC James A. Martin, Ph.D.
SPC Dorothy M. Leary, M.A.

PROJECT START DATE: May 1987

COMPLETION DATE: June 1988

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH:

To study the effects of an extended separation on wives whose husbands are assigned to an aviation brigade and are participating in an extended (2 months) field training exercise. The was was performed through the use of self-administered, mailed questionnaires. Prior to separation, the study focussed on targeting potential problem areas for wives. The impact of military community agency and command-generated aid was evaluated and a retrospective view of coping and reported difficulties associated with reunion was studied.

MAJOR PRODUCTS COMPLETED:

The predeployment data suggested that:
1. The wives were primarily worried about their husbands' safety and the unpredictable nature of their husbands' jobs.
2. They were interested in detailed information about the deployment (When will they go? How long will they be away?) and about pertinent arrangements for wives (How will I get mail to my husband? Who should I call in an emergency?)
3. Many of these women, especially the junior enlisted wives, were anxious about how well they (and their children) would cope during the separation. Financial issues were also a common concern.
4. The most salient sources of perceived support for these women were their own husbands and their extended family members. Many of these women, especially the wives of senior enlisted members, appeared to have relatively sparse social networks.

At the deployment phase:

1. Slightly more than half of the wives were actually separated from their husbands cue to some type of training.
2. The leading concern for all groups was loneliness. Various family life issues like obtaining medical care and being able to get to various post facilities, were not serious problems for most wives.
3. While most wives expressed a positive view of formal military and civilian community agencies like the installation hospital

and the military police, 30 to 50% of the respondents did not feel that various service activities like Army Community Service, the Family Life Center and Wives' Support Groups were reliable sources of support.
4. Approximately 70% of the wives viewd the unit as a reliable source of support during husbands' absence. Written information from the unit was consistently rated as the most accurate and helpful source of information available.

At postdeployment:

1. Across the three study periods, the junior enlisted wives experienced the greatest amount of general family life stress and their primary concerns were economic. Interestingly, in addition to the persistent emphasis on loneliness during separations, concern about friends moving away was the other military family life issue that seemed to impact on all wives regardless of husband's work.
2. Junior enlisted wives expressed the greatest degree of stress related to their husbands' duties. While a fear of possible combat was a concern for all wives, the junior enlisted wives seemed to be particularly troubled by unpredictable separations.
3. For the separated wives, symptoms of depression increased during the separation period and then returned to a lower level after the separation period.
4. The data about various forms and sources of informal social support perceived to be available from other unit wives was also informative. The most critical observation was that it was the wives of the senior enlisted soldiers who seemed to be at greatest risk in terms of their apparent lack of informal social support during periods of husband absence. They had the least trust in what should be a very important source of help and comfort for military wives -- other unit wives.

Based on all of this information there are a few recommendations that should be considered:

1. Wives want and need practical information that will help them better cope with military family life requirements like training separations. The best way to get this information to wives appears to be through simple written information originating from (or at least sponsored by) the husband's unit.
2. For obvious reasons, junior enlisted wives need the most help in coping with aspects of family life. One critical area that should receive attention is economic issues. While additional data would be useful, actions like help in locating decent, low-cost housing, consumer education programs and employment assistance would seem useful.
3. While it is encouraging to see wives who feel positive about aspects of the formal helping resources in their community, we should be concerned that many wives do not view some important agencies and activities as reliable sources of help in times of need.
4. As a final comment, it is very important to point out that the

sample of military wives described in this report cannot be viewed as representing all military wives, and may not even be an adequate representation of the wives in this particular unit. Because of the data collection method used, the response rates the small number of participants, considerable caution must be used in any interpretation of these data. At the same time, the data do provide some interesting and informative findings that can offer insight and suggestions for unit leaders and community representatives concerned about military family well-being and the specific issue of deployment separation.

Publications

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